

Michael Blankenship

Lieutenant, U.S. Navy

Public Affairs Officer

Lieutenant Michael Blankenship, from Austin, Texas, graduated from Killeen High School in 1990, where he played varsity football. He enlisted in the Navy in 1992 and reported to Great Lakes, Illinois, for basic training. Upon graduation, he attended the Defense Information School for military journalists at Ft. Benjamin Harrison, Indiana, graduating in 1993.

In May 1993, Michael reported as the staff journalist to the Supreme Allied Commander, Atlantic (SACLANT), NATO's maritime headquarters in Norfolk, Virginia. In August 1995, he was selected for the Navy's Enlisted Education Advancement Program and reported to Old Dominion University in Norfolk. Michael graduated in December 1996 with a Bachelor of Arts degree in English.

After graduation, he reported to Naval Mobile Construction Battalion 74, the "Does More" battalion, based in Gulfport, Mississippi, where he served as an independent duty journalist, making deployments to both Puerto Rico and Okinawa, Japan. In January 1998 he was selected for the Special Duty Public Affairs Officer program and reported to Officer Candidate School in Pensacola, Florida.

Upon commissioning in May 1998, Michael reported to the staff of the Navy Office of Information. During his tour, he worked closely with national and international media to produce documentaries and feature presentations about the Navy. He also served as the Aide to the Navy's Chief of Information, working for the Navy's most senior public affairs officer. During his tour, he earned his Master of Arts degree in education from the University of Phoenix.

Michael joined the Blue Angels in 2000. His personal decorations include two Navy Commendation Medals, the Joint Service Achievement Medal and various other service and personal awards.